

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-14 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-15 DLOS-09 OES-07 INT-05 EB-08 COME-00
HA-05 /118 W

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R 221420Z DEC 77
FM AMCONSUL HALIFAX
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1959 PRIORITY
INFO AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 HALIFAX 0623

E O 11652: N/A
TAGS: ECON EFIS ENRG ETRN PGOV CA
SUBJECT: VISIT OF GOC INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS MINISTER
TO ATLANTIC CANADA

BEGIN SUMMARY: GOC INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS MINISTER
MARC LALONDE VISITED ATLANTIC CANADA PROVINCIAL CAPITALS
DEC 14 THRU 16 TO DISCUSS CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES AND
THE POSSIBLE FRAMEWORK OF FUTURE FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL
RELATIONS. MEETING WITH PREMIERS (IN NB, NS, AND PEI)
AND WITH HIS PROVINCIAL COUNTERPART (IN NFLD) LALONDE
OUTLINED OTTAWA'S VIEWS ON FUTURE SHARING OF POWERS BETWEEN
THE TWO LEVELS OF GOVT. HE ALSO TOOK NOTE OF PROVINCIAL
CONCERN ON VARIOUS ISSUES AND PROJECTS AND PROMISED TO
DO HIS BEST TO EXPEDITE GOC CONSIDERATION AND RESPONSES.
PEI PREMIER CAMPBELL USED OCCASION OF LALONDE VISIT
TO ADVOCATE AN END TO GOC REGULATION OF THE INSHORE
FISHERY. THIS PROPOSAL OF CAMPBELL'S, HOWEVER, SEEMS
TO HAVE MET A NEGATIVE RESPONSE AMONG THE FISHERIES
DEPTS OF NB, NS, AND NFLD. END SUMMARY.

1. GOC INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS MINISTER MARC LALONDE
MADE WHIRLWIND VISIT TO ATLANTIC CANADA'S FOUR
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PROVINCES DURING PERIOD DEC 14 THRU 16. PRESS
REPORTS SHOWED FOLLOWING MATTERS DISCUSSED:

A) IN PEI, LALONDE SAID COUNTRY'S ECONOMIC
PROBLEMS MIGHT REQUIRE CHANGES OF A "STRUCTURAL NATURE"
TO BE IMPLEMENTED OVER MEDIUM TO LONG TERM. HE DID
NOT SPECIFICALLY SAY THAT CHANGES WOULD BE CONSTITUTIONAL

IN NATURE BUT DID SAY THAT THEY MIGHT INVOLVE DELEGATING TO PROVINCES CERTAIN POWERS NOW EXERCISED BY FEDERAL GOVT. IN REPLY TO PREMIER CAMPBELL'S EXPLANATION OF WHY HE (CAMPBELL) THINKS GOC SHOULD NOT APPEAL RECENT COURT RULING ON OTTAWA'S COMMITMENT TO PROVIDE GUARANTEED AND CONTINUOUS FERRY SERVICE TO THE ISLAND, LALONDE PROMISED AN ANNOUNCEMENT ON THE GOC'S INTENTIONS ASAP. IN THIS CONNECTION, CAMPBELL SAID HE THOUGHT THE FERRY MATTER HAD BEEN TREATED AS A LEGAL PROBLEM LONG ENOUGH AND THAT IT IS NOW TIME TO REACH A POLITICAL DECISION.

APPARENTLY WITH RELATION TO LALONDE'S MENTION OF DELEGATING CERTAIN FEDERAL POWER TO THE PROVINCES, CAMPBELL TOLD PRESS THAT IN HIS OPINION THE FEDERAL GOVT SHOULD RELINQUISH ITS REGULATORY AUTHORITY OVER THE INSHORE FISHERY AND SHOULD CONFINE ITS REGULATIONS TO THE OFFSHORE FISHERY. LALONDE, HOWEVER, SAID THAT SUCH A MOVE WOULD REQUIRE CONSIDERABLE EXPLORATION BY OTTAWA ON HOW TO AVOID "DUPLICATION OF BUREAUCRACIES AND MINISTERS STEPPING ON EACH OTHERS TOES."

B) TALKING IN NFLD WITH ALEX HICKMAN, HIS PROVINCIAL COUNTERPART, LALONDE NOTED THAT VARIOUS PROVINCIAL SPOKESMEN HAVE CALLED FOR GREATER FREEDOM FOR THE PROVINCES BUT THAT LITTLE IN THE WAY OF SPECIFICS HAS BEEN UNCLASSIFIED

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GIVEN EXCEPT FOR ALBERTA'S VIEWS ON NATURAL RESOURCES. REFERRING TO A REVAMPING OF CANADA'S SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT, LALONDE STATED THAT ALL THE GOC IS INSISTING ON IS A FEDERAL SYSTEM, A CHARTER OF HUMAN RIGHTS, AND A NEW CONSTITUTION. EVERYTHING ELSE IS NEGOTIABLE.

HE SAID OTTAWA WAS EXAMINING CLOSELY NFLD'S

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PROPOSALS FOR AN EARLY START-UP OF THE GULL ISLAND HYDRO PROJECT IN LABRADOR AND THAT AN ANSWER WAS ANTICIPATED BEFORE THE START OF 1978-9 FISCAL YEAR, APR 1. HICKMAN SAID HE WAS HEARTENED BY THIS BIT OF NEWS.

C) NOVA SCOTIA PREMIER GERALD REGAN, LALONDE INDICATED, HAS ACCEPTED THAT OTTAWA WILL LIMIT THE AMOUNT OF POWER SACRIFICED TO THE PROVINCES IN A REVAMPED CONSTITUTION. LALONDE AGREED WITH A REGAN SUGGESTION THAT CHANGES WITH QUEBEC'S OPPOSITION PARTIES BUT NOT WITH THE GOVT OF QUEBEC SINCE THE END RESULT OF CONSULTATIONS WITH THE PQ LEADERSHIP WOULD JUST BE AN IMPASSE.

LALONDE PROMISED ANNOUNCEMENTS SOON WITH REGARD TO SHORT-TERM AND LIMITED REFURBISHING OF THE SYDNEY STEEL CORPORATION PLANT AND ON OFFSHORE DRILLING FOR COAL.

D) PRESS REPORT OF LALONDE'S VISIT TO PREMIER HATFIELD OF NEW BRUNSWICK MERELY STATED THAT "VERY GENERAL" DISCUSSIONS ON THE CONSTITUTION AND ON THE ECONOMY WERE HELD.

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2. COMMENT: MOST INTERESTING OUTGROWTH OF LALONDE VISIT WAS PEI PREMIER CAMPBELL'S PROPOSAL THAT GOC RELINQUISH ITS REGULATORY AUTHORITY OVER INSHORE FISH STOCKS. A CHECK WITH THE DEPTS OF FISHERIES IN NS, NB, AND NFLD, HOWEVER, SHOWED THE REPORTING OFFICER THAT THERE WOULD BE NO SUPPORT FOR THIS PROPOSAL IN OTHER PROVINCES. SPOKESMEN FOR THE SEVERAL FISHERIES DEPTS ALL POINTED OUT THAT THERE IS NO UNIVERSALLY-AGREED DEFINITION OF THE BOUNDARIES OF THE INSHORE AND THE OFFSHORE FISHERIES, THAT MANAGEMENT OF FISH STOCKS WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE IF EACH PROVINCE SET ITS OWN TOTAL ALLOWABLE CATCH, THAT EXPENSIVE AND DUPLICATIVE BUREAUCRACIES WOULD BE REQUIRED TO ADMINISTER THE INSHORE FISHERIES, AND THAT INTERPROVINCIAL HASSLING OVER BOUNDARIES WOULD MAKE A NIGHTMARE OF SUCH AN

ARRANGEMENT. EVEN NFLD S FISHERIES MINISTER, WALTER CARTER,
WHO CAN NORMALLY SAY NOTHING GOOD FOR GOC FISHERIES MINISTER
ROMEO LEBLANC AND HIS MINIONS, FINALLY HAD TO ADMIT
(GRUDGINGLY) THAT THERE REALLY SEEMED TO BE NO FEASIBLE
ALTERNATIVE TO OTTAWA'S MANAGEMENT OF ALL FISHERIES.
END COMMENT.

3. DRAFTER: JHMOORE.
MOORE

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